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U.S. Army incentive program : incentives that motivate recruiters

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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

U.S. ARMY INCENTIVE PROGRAM: INCENTIVES THAT MOTIVATE RECRUITERS

by

Benjamin J. Starkey

September 1999

Principal Advisor:	Bob Barrios-Choplin
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ABSTRACT *(Maximum 200 words)*

This thesis examines the United States Army incentive programs used to motivate Army Recruiters. In the late 1990s, U.S. Army recruiters are having substantial difficulty meeting their recruiting-mission requirements. Sixty recruiters and staff personnel at the brigade, battalion and company echelons were randomly selected and interviewed on how the various national and local incentives motivate recruiters to meet and exceed recruiting-mission requirements.

Findings indicate that the overall incentive program does not appear to motivate recruiters. What does seem to motivate recruiters are intrinsic factors such as self-motivation and time-off. A surprise finding emerging from the study was the apparent absence of any measurement system to evaluate the effect of incentives on recruiter productivity. Recommendations to better align recruiter incentives with desired performance include family rewards, time-off, and a geographic point system.

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U.S ARMY INCENTIVE PROGRAM: INCENTIVES THAT MOTIVATE RECRUITERS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the United States Army incentive programs used to motivate Army Recruiters. In the late 1990s, U.S. Army recruiters are having substantial difficulty meeting their recruiting-mission requirements. Sixty recruiters and staff personnel at the brigade, battalion and company echelons were randomly selected and interviewed on how the various national and local incentives motivate recruiters to meet and exceed recruiting-mission requirements.

Findings indicate that the overall incentive program does not appear to motivate recruiters. What does seem to motivate recruiters are intrinsic factors such as self-motivation and time-off. A surprise finding emerging from the study was the apparent absence of any measurement system to evaluate the effect of incentives on recruiter productivity. Recommendations to better align recruiter incentives with desired performance include family rewards, time-off, and a geographic point system.

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I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   PURPOSE

This thesis examines the United States Army incentive programs used to motivate Army recruiters. United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) and local incentive programs at different echelons (brigade, battalion, company, and local recruiting office) are examined. The purpose of this study is to identify the types of incentives used to motivate recruiters, and the extent to which the incentives influence recruiters to meet or exceed their recruiting (mission) requirements. Conclusions about the effect incentives have on recruiters are drawn and recommendations are made.

B.   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were designed to examine how recruiter incentives influence morale and encourage recruiters to meet and exceed mission requirements:

Primary Research Question

1.   How do Army incentives influence recruiter motivation to meet mission-recruiting requirements?

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Secondary Research Questions

1. Which U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC)
    national incentives are perceived to have the
    greatest positive influence on recruiter
    motivation?

2. Which U.S. Army local incentives are perceived to
    have the greatest positive influence on recruiter
    motivation?

3. What new or improved incentives could motivate
    Army recruiters to better meet or exceed mission-
    recruiting requirements?

C.   SCOPE

This thesis analyzes the perceived effects of USAREC

and local incentive programs on the motivation aspects of

Army recruiters. The study identifies incentives that have

a positive effect on Army recruiters in terms of meeting

recruiting mission requirements and positively influencing

morale. For purposes of the study, 50 Army recruiters were

randomly selected throughout the continental United States.

They were interviewed and asked 18 questions about how the

various national and local incentive plans affect their

motivation to meet recruiting mission requirements.

Additionally, 10 Army staff personnel at the brigade,

battalion and company echelons were also randomly selected

and interviewed. They were asked a different set of

questions about recruiting incentive programs.

Specifically, these interviews consisted of 9 questions

about the development, monitoring and perceived effects of national and local incentives on Army recruiters. The interviews were used to identify the various recruiter incentives at the different echelon levels and to collect qualitative data on how the incentives are perceived to motivate Army recruiters.

D.   METHODOLOGY

A total of 60 semi-structured interviews were conducted with Army recruiting and staff personnel to identify national and local incentives and to evaluate the perceived effects of incentives on recruiter productivity and morale. Interview questions were based on a review of the national incentive program instruction and input from USAREC headquarters. Fifty Army recruiters and 10 command staff personnel were asked separate sets of questions (Appendix A and B respectively).

E.   ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

Chapter II describes background information relevant to USAREC and local incentive programs. Chapter III is a literature review of motivational theory potentially applicable to understanding and predicting behavior associated with rewards and incentives. Chapter IV is the research methodology used to collect and analyze the data.

Chapter V is a qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews; including statistical analysis of findings. Chapter VI is overall conclusions of the study and recommendations on possible alternatives to improving current incentive programs and creating new incentives to enhance and boost recruiter motivation to meet and exceed mission requirements. Follow-on additional research is suggested.

II.   BACKGROUND

A.   INTRODUCTION

In the late 1990s, U.S. Army recruiters are having substantial difficulty meeting their recruiting (mission) requirements. In fact, they have failed to meet mission two years in a row (Army Times, 1999). Identifying and using effective recruiter incentives is the subject of considerable debate. Policy changes are often targeted at new enlistees, such as increasing the college fund from $40K to $50K and adding a $3K enlistment bonus. However, recruiter incentives seem almost frozen in time.

The incentive awards program is designed to reward recruiters who meet or exceed their mission requirements. With the current mission requirement shortfall, recruiting stations spend most of the time looking at the number of enlistees needed to meet annual year end-strength requirements. In fact, every in-brief at the recruiting commands conducted during this study noted that recruiters have to be concerned about making mission requirement first, before being concerned about how they will be rewarded. According to the Command Sergeant Majors interviewed, recruiters were not making the required mission and this was their number one priority. According

to Higgens (1999), limiting incentives to a few "key"
individuals effectively benches the rest of the team.
Basically, if only a few personnel can achieve the rewards
then the rest of the recruiting team may be less motivated
and therefore less likely to meet their monthly mission
requirement.

These problems form the central basis for this study.
Current motivational factors and incentive rewards are
reviewed and evaluated based primarily on the perceptions
of recruiters and recruiting command staff personnel. A
brief description of a typical Army recruiter and the
composition of the recruiting community are provided.

B.   THE ARMY RECRUITER

The typical Army recruiter is a soldier and Non-
commissioned Officer (NCO) between the rank of E5 and E9.
The path to recruiting duty is achieved by volunteering or
being detailed (DA). DA recruiters make up 70 percent of
the Army's recruiting force. (USAREC, 1998) DA selected
recruiters are nominated by their chain of command. To be
nominated, a solider must have an outstanding military
record with no prior disciplinary problems. Based on 1998
USAREC data, approximately 30 percent of recruiters
volunteer for recruiting duty. Approximately 70 percent of

the recruiting force come from other Military Occupational

Specialties (MOS) and are DA selected.

Recruiters have the opportunity to apply for the

career recruiter (79R) MOS after completing 18 months of

recruiting. The 79R MOS designates a career recruiter and

the recruiting field becomes their primary duty for the

remainder of their military careers. The process of

becoming a career recruiter involves an application and

final selection made by USAREC. Quotas (set by USAREC)

limit the size of the 79R MOS community.

C.   USAREC INCENTIVE AWARDS

The purpose of the USAREC incentive awards program is

to motivate and reward outstanding recruiters (USAREC,

1999). Awards are determined by the amount of points a

recruiter earns during a recruiting tour. Table 2.1 lists

the various incentive awards that are awarded by USAREC

and the required points to earn them.

Award	Points
1st Gold Achievement Star	240
2nd Gold Achievement Star	300
3rd Gold Achievement Star	300
Gold Recruiter Badge	300
1st Sapphire Achievement Star	300
2nd Sapphire Achievement Star	300
3rd Sapphire Achievement Star	300
Recruiter Ring	1200
Glen E. Morrell Award	2400

Source: USAREC, 1999.

Table 2.1. Awards

Recruiters must earn awards in the sequence shown and points are not transferable to other awards. The Glen E. Morrell Award is the ultimate award under the incentive award program. This award is a prestigious medallion worn only at USAREC formal functions.

The value of making recruiting station (RS) mission box is 50 points. Mission box is a term for the required

production (quota) each recruiter must meet on a monthly basis. On average, a monthly mission box is two contracts. USAREC mission requirements and the number of prospects for a geographical location determines the type of contract that the recruiter must meet. Recruiters receive production points based on the category of enlistee who is recruited. Table 2.2 shows how types of enlistees being recruited determine the amount of recruiter production points awarded. The regular Army (RA) has three categories for accumulating points. The production points for a high school graduate are the highest since the Army has a 90 percent high school degree accession goal. The USAREC point and reward system is relevant in Chapter V data analysis.

The Army currently allows only 10 percent of its recruits to come in with a General Equivalency Degree (GED) (Army Times, 1999). This is because according to a General Accounting Office report, nearly 50 percent of GED soldiers leave the military before their first term has expired (Army Times, 1999).

RA Category	Acronym	Points
Graduate/Senior Alpha	GSA	20
Senior Bravo	SB	15
Other (Other High School Grads/ Non-High School Grads	Other	10

Source: USAREC, 1999.

Table 2.2. Regular Army Production Point Values

A "sliding window" is a recruiting term referring to the specific period during which production points are valid. Other than the 1st Gold Star, a six-month sliding window applies through the 3rd Sapphire. Basically, when production points become seven months old they are lost for earning this award. The recruiter ring has a 24-month sliding window and there is no time limit on earning the Glen E. Morrell award.

Recruiters receive 10 points for shipping an enlistee to basic training. Since enlistees can enter the military under the delayed entry program (DEP), the recruiter must track the individual for a period of up to 12 months, as the DEP allows enlistees to delay their entrance into the military for that long.

Recruiters receive double production points when they exceed the mission box in a recruiting month. All contracts for the rest of that recruiting month receives double points for over-production.

D.   LOCAL INCENTIVES

In addition to the USAREC incentives, Army recruiting brigades and battalions have their own unique incentive award programs. Since monetary incentives are against current military regulation, the standard types of military recognition awards include plaques, letters and trophies. Every brigade has a different budget for awards ranging from $12K to $15K per year. Battalion award budgets range from $6K to $10K per year. Below the battalion level, time-off passes are used as incentives since the company and recruiting station (RS) have no monetary budget for awards.

According to USAREC, battalion incentive award programs are region specific. Review of battalion incentive award instructions confirmed that each region is somewhat unique in terms of its awards program. Battalion commanders use an array of non-monetary incentives to motivate recruiters. One popular approach is the coin/point system. This system allows recruiters to earn

coins for each enlistee contract. The coins are used to
buy battalion incidentals (trinkets) such as pens and
sweat suits. One battalion uses a tier-system based on
outstanding performance for achieving monthly, quarterly
and yearly mission boxes. These monthly, quarterly and
yearly awards have a monetary value of $25, 50 and 75
dollars respectively. For example, a pen and pencil set
with the battalion Army logo would have a monetary value
of $25 dollars. All trinkets awarded by the recruiting
command must have the battalion Army logo imprinted on the
item.

E.   RECRUITING SHORTFALLS

After more than 25 years of an all-volunteer force,
all the services (except the Marine Corps) are facing
recruiting shortfalls. The Army had a 750-recruit shortage
in 1998, and 1999 projections indicate additional
shortages (Army Times, 1999).

"Recruiting Problems: Another Body Blow" (Army Times,
1999), predicts the Army's 1999 goal of 74,500 accessions
will not be met. After the first quarter of the 1999
recruiting year, the shortfall was 2,300. This is over
three times the total shortage for 1998. According to Army
Secretary Louis Caldera, 79 million dollars in new

enlistment incentives will have a positive impact on stemming the shortage problem. The incentives include a $3K cash bonus for most recruits, a signing bonus up to $20K, and an increase in the Army college fund to a maximum benefit of $50K. Understanding the recruiting shortage and the steps the Army is taking to eliminate the shortfall is an important corollary to this study. In short, improving recruiter incentives should maximize results obtained from improving enlistment incentives.

F. SUMMARY

Recruiters can earn awards for productivity through incentive systems at the USAREC, and the local command level. Both incentive award programs have budget constraints and congressional limitations on the types of awards that can be given. The national award program was based on the Freeman Plan, an incentive award program that gives recruiters productivity points for recruits based on their level of education and how well they do on armed forces qualification test (AFQT) (Oken and Asch, 1997). The purpose of the Freeman Plan is to emphasize and stimulate induction of higher quality recruits.

This chapter provided a basic background about Army recruiter selection and the types of incentives used to reward recruiter productivity. Also discussed, was the current recruiting shortfall that poses a fundamental challenge to recruiters, the Army, and ultimately to national defense.

This study contributes to solving this complex problem by analyzing the perceptions of a cross-section of Army recruiters on how best to motivate recruiters. Conclusions are made about the utility of current incentives, and recommendations are offered for unfreezing a potentially outdated incentive system.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

A.   INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces frameworks relevant to
understanding motivational theory. A cognitive model is
discussed on the process individuals go through when
motivated to perform. An instrumentality model of
motivation by Porter and Lawler (1968) is used to address
the construct of human motivation. In this study, the
motivation of Army recruiters will be looked at in terms
of what type of awards (incentives) help motivate and
increase productivity. From the intrinsic reward
component, Thomas and Jansen (1996) provide a study of
intrinsic motivation in the military. Their integrative
theory presents four types of intrinsic rewards that
individuals can receive from work tasks: senses of choice,
competence, meaningfulness, and progress (Thomas and
Jansen, 1996).

B.   COGNITIVE THEORY

Cognitive theory is primarily a psychological
approach to motivation. The basic tenet of this theory is
that a major determinant of human behavior is the belief,
expectation, and anticipation individuals have concerning
future events. (Porter and Steers, 1983) Behavior is seen

as purposeful and goal-directed, and based on conscious intentions. People are viewed as reasoning, thinking individuals who rationally consider the consequences of their actions at work. The cognitive theory attempts to develop a model concerning the thought processes people go through as they make decisions on participating and performing in the workplace.

Early researchers in this field, Lewin (1938) and Tolman (1959) completed extensive research about cognitive theory or "instrumentality" theory. Instrumentality theory addresses motivational force as a multiplicative function of two key variables: expectancies and valences. (Porter and Steers, 1983) Expectancies are individuals understanding that particular actions and beliefs lead to certain outcomes. Valence denotes the amount of positive or negative value placed on the outcome by an individual. Individuals tend to select a mode of behavior that maximizes their potential benefits. The conceptual equation for these relationships is effort = expectancy x valence.

The expectancy/valence theory stresses anticipation of response-outcome connection. In this theory, expectancy is a probability estimate of a relationship between action

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and outcome. The relationship between action and outcome (value of a reward) is known as an instrumentality relationship. (Porter and Steers, 1983) This theory evolved into the instrumentality model developed by Porter and Lawler. This model will be used to replicate the process of how recruiters perceive the national and local incentive programs.

C.   THE PORTER-LAWLER MODEL

Porter and Lawler (1968) developed an instrumentality motivational model that addresses the concepts and terminology applicable to the construct of human motivation. The emphasis of their theoretical model is to determine the value of a reward in terms of individual motivation. Specifically, how do intrinsic and extrinsic rewards motivate behavior? Figure 3.1 is a diagram of Porter and Lawler's theoretical model.

	Value of Reward	1
Perceived Effort Reward Probability	2
Effort	3
Abilities and Traits	4
Role Perceptions	5
Performance (Accomplishment)	6
Perceived Equitable Rewards	8
Intrinsic Rewards	7
Extrinsic Rewards	7
Satisfaction	9
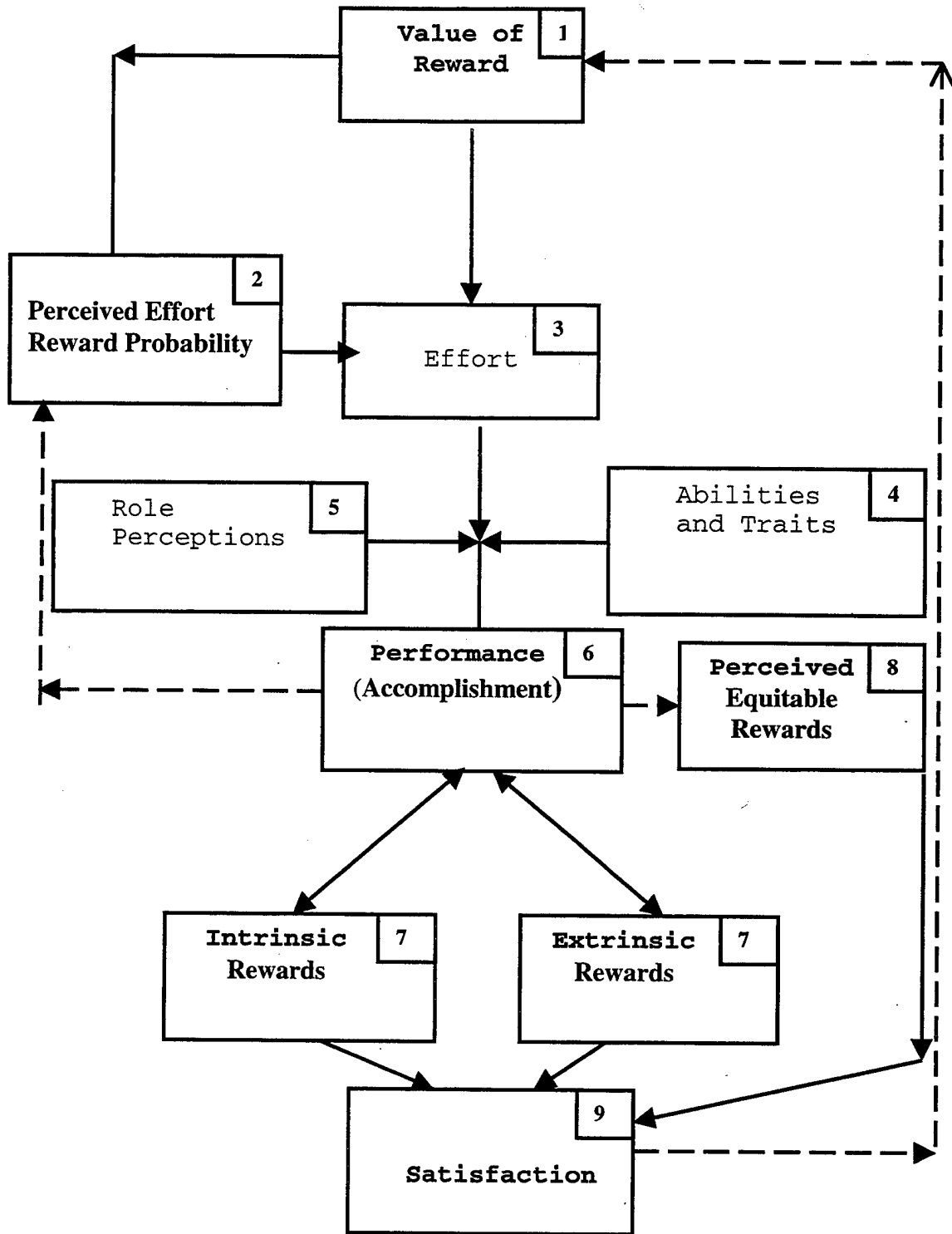
Source: Adopted from Porter and Steers, 1983.

Figure 3.1. Porter and Lawler Model

The following nine components of the Porter and Lawler theoretical model are discussed:

1. **Value of the Reward.** This component describes the attractiveness of various outcomes to the individual. People attach different reference values to outcomes.

2. **Perceived Effort-Reward Probability.** This component refers to the subjective estimate of the individual that increased effort will lead to the acquisition of some valued reward.

3. **Effort.** This component is intended to supply an explanation of how hard an individual works, rather than how effectively an individual performs.

4. **Abilities and Traits.** This is where the relatively stable characteristics of the individual such as intelligence, personality characteristics, and psychomotor skills are determined. The abilities and traits are set as upper limits for performance. They are considered "boundary conditions."

5. **Role Perceptions.** The role of perception is an individual's definition of successful performance on a particular job. This is a critical factor in determining whether or not effort is transformed into good performance.

6. **Performance.** Performance refers to the level of accomplishment the individual achieves. It is the result of the combined effects of effort expenditure, role perceptions, and ability and trait patterns.

7. **Rewards.** Porter and Lawler distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Intrinsic rewards satisfy higher-order needs and are self-administered by the individual, rather than by some external agent. Self-motivation is an example of an Army recruiter that is satisfied by an intrinsic reward. Extrinsic rewards are

rewards administered by an external agent. For example, the recruiter ring and sweat suit are rewards given by the Army brigade or battalion.

8. **Perceived Equitable Rewards.** This component is a description of the level of reward that an individual feels is appropriate. It is determined by the individual's perception concerning how well they fit the role requirement of the job, and their perception of how well they perform the task.

9. **Satisfaction.** Porter and Lawler refer to satisfaction as a "derivative variable." Its meaning or value is determined by the individual's comparison of how they consider an equitable reward with the actual reward. The larger the perceived value difference between the actual and perceived equitable reward the greater the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction accordingly (Lawler and Porter, 1968).

D. INTRINSIC MOTIVATION IN THE MILITARY

A theory by Thomas and Jansen (1996) about intrinsic motivation in the military explains four types of intrinsic rewards: choice, competence, meaningfulness, and progress. The integrative theory of intrinsic task motivation provides a detailed description of the four intrinsic rewards. This theory provides additional details about Porter and Lawler's "rewards" component previously discussed. The four components of intrinsic rewards are discussed:

1. **Choice** is the opportunity you feel to select task activities that make sense to you, and to perform them in ways that seem appropriate. Army

recruiters are given a monthly mission with different types of enlistees required for that month. The recruiter has the flexibility to make contact with local high schools or working the phone list for prospects.

2. **Competence** is the accomplishment one feels in skillfully performing chosen activities. The feeling of competence involves the sense that you are doing quality work on a task.

3. **Meaningfulness** is the opportunity you feel to pursue a worthy task purpose. Meaningfulness is the feeling that you are on a path that is worth your time and energy, which has value.

4. **Progress** is the accomplishment you feel in achieving the task purpose. The feeling of progress involves the sense that the task is moving forward and that your activities are really accomplishing something (Thomas and Jansen, 1996).

E. SUMMARY

This chapter provides a brief review of human motivation. This framework is necessary in determining if an intrinsic or extrinsic reward (incentive) satisfies and motivates an Army recruiter to meet or exceed mission (productivity). The bold blocks in the Porter and Lawler model (Figure 3.1) are the key components that apply to this study. The intrinsic task rewards described by Thomas and Jansen and the key components from Porter and Lawler will be used to provide guidance and insight when interpreting the data analysis discussed in Chapter VI.

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IV. METHODOLOGY

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes how the data from Army recruiters was collected and the data analysis tool used to examine the data. Interview questions were developed to identify the types of incentives that motivate Army recruiters to meet or exceed their recruiting mission. The national incentive program instruction and input from USAREC headquarters was used to refine interview questions.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 Army recruiting and staff personnel. The objective was to identify national and local incentives and to evaluate the perceived effects of incentives on recruiter productivity and morale. Interview data were coded, and quantitative results were obtained.

B. ARMY RECRUITING COMMAND INTERVIEWS

The Army recruiting command is composed of the following echelons: 5 brigades, 41 battalions, 238 companies, and 1570 recruiting stations. A stratified random sample of personnel was selected for interviews. The selection for the sample was stratified based on time and geographic constraints.

This study includes interviews of personnel from all five recruiting regions. To determine the best way to interview personnel from all five regions with minimum travel, the continental United States was divided into four regional trips to conduct face-to-face interviews.

Three of the five Army recruiting brigades were chosen throughout the continental United States. The selected brigades provided necessary groundwork in completing the selection for the four regional trips. These locations became the center point of visits and gave a geographic plot for other USAREC echelon levels within that region. Upon establishing the Army recruiting brigade locations, the battalion, company and recruiting station visits were all coordinated in conjunction with the geographic location of the brigade.

The selection of battalion, company and recruiting station site visits was determined by viewing a map and a station roster, and pinpointing locations that were within driving range of the brigade. In total, 10 battalions, 5 companies and 25 recruiting offices (40 locations) were visited during four separate weeks of travel to conduct the interviews.

C.   SUMMARY

Completing the interviews at 40 locations will provide the Army with a reasonable sample of how recruiters view the current incentive awards. The cross-section of individuals interviewed resulted in useful data for understanding how the current systems (national and local) motivates recruiters, and how new or enhanced incentives could boost recruiter productivity. Responses from open-ended questions were grouped and results are shown in Chapter V.

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V. RESULTS

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the results from 50 semi-structured interviews conducted with Army recruiters and 10 semi-structured interviews conducted with Army recruiting staff personnel. Results from the 50 semi-structured interviews are graphed by frequencies of grouped responses. A graph for each question is provided. Results from the 10 semi-structured interviews with Army recruiting staff are also shown to indicate perceptions of the overall incentive program policies at the national and brigade levels.

B. RECRUITER INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Recruiters from 40 locations provided the following answers to the questionnaire shown in Appendix A. Responses were coded and grouped by similar answers. Responses provide answers to the primary and secondary research questions:

Primary Research Question

1. How do Army incentives influence recruiter motivation to meet mission-recruiting requirements?

Secondary Research Questions

1. Which U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC)
    national incentives are perceived to have the
    greatest positive influence on recruiter
    motivation?

2. Which U.S. Army local incentives are perceived
    to have the greatest positive influence on
    recruiter motivation?

3. What new or improved incentives could motivate
    Army recruiters to better meet or exceed
    mission-recruiting requirements?

1.   What is your rank?

Figure 5.1 shows of the 50 respondents, 10 were E-5
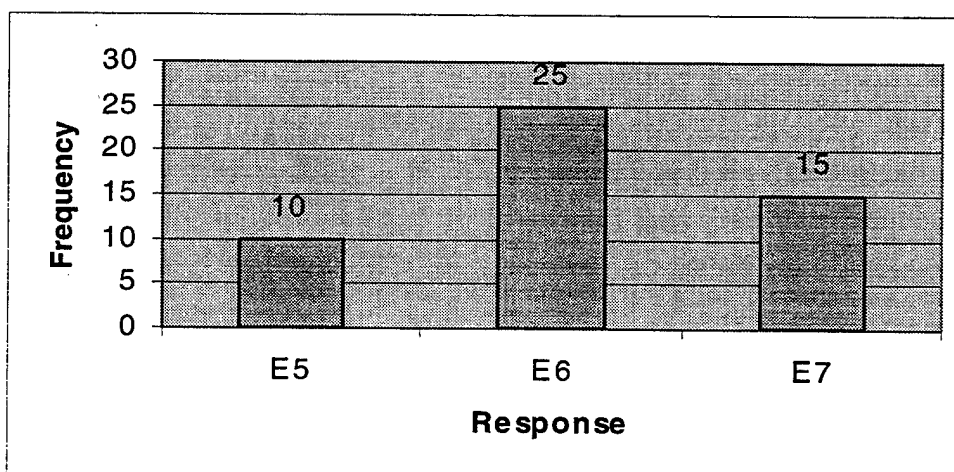(20 percent), 25 were E-6 (50 percent), and 6 were E-7
(30 percent).

Figure 5.1. Rank of Interviewed Recruiters

2.   What is your Gender?

Of the 50 respondents, 42 were male (84 percent) and
8 were females (16 percent).

3. How long have you been in the Army?

Figure 5.2 shows years of active duty per respondent. Of the 50 respondents, 27 have been on active duty for 10 to 15 years of service (54 percent) and 11 have been on active duty less then 10 years (22 percent).
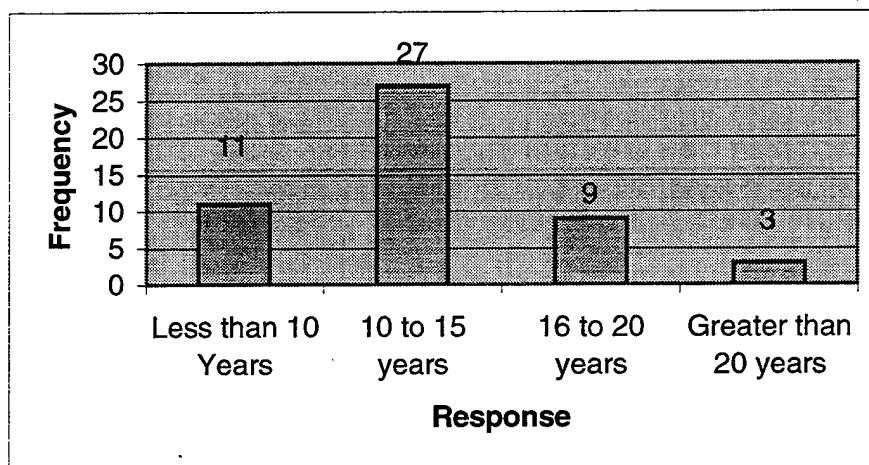

Figure 5.2. Army Recruiters Years of Service

4. Are you Married?

Of the 50 respondents, 37 were married (74 percent) and 13 were not married (26 percent).

5. How long have you been in recruiting?

Figure 5.3 shows the number of years recruiters have been in recruiting. Of the 50 respondents, 26 have been recruiting between one to two years (52 percent) and 10 have been in recruiting for less than 1 year (20 percent).
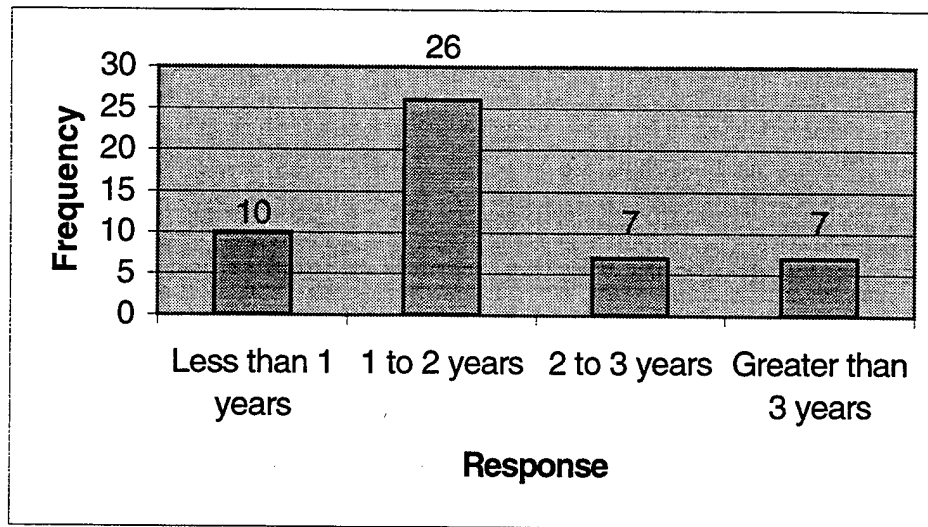
Figure 5.3. Years of Army Recruiting Duty

6.   How long have you been in this assignment?

Figure 5.4 shows the number of years the recruiter has been on the current recruiting assignment. Of the 50 respondents, 30 have been in their current assignment between one and two years (60 percent) and 14 have been on their current assignment for less than one year (28 percent).
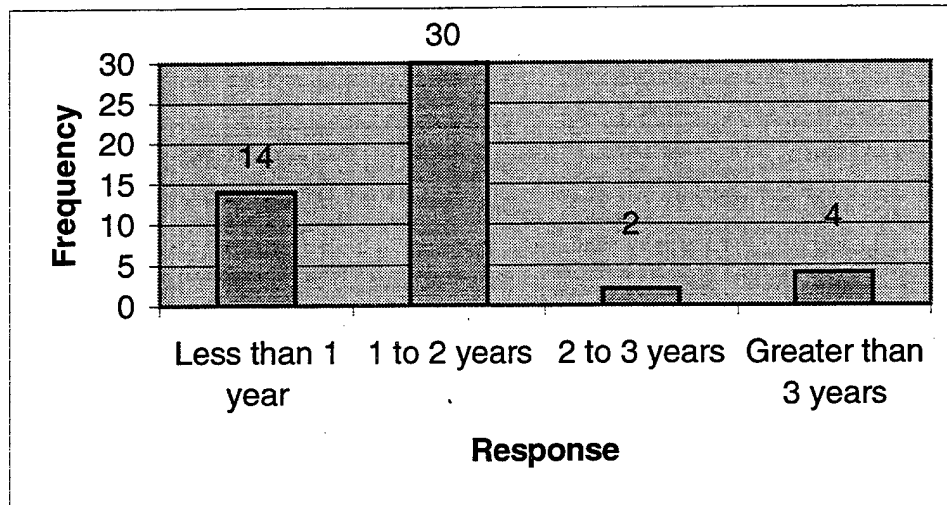
Figure 5.4. Years at Current Recruiting Assignment

7.   Are you a volunteer for this assignment?

Of the 50 respondents, 28 were detailed (non-volunteers) for recruiting duty (56 percent) and 22 were volunteers (44 percent).

8. Are you a Cadre (79R)?

Of the 50 respondents, 21 recruiters were career recruiters (42 percent) and 29 were non-career recruiters (58 percent).

9. Do you enjoy recruiting?

Figure 5.5 shows the number of respondents that enjoy their recruiting job. Of the 50 respondents, 29 enjoy recruiting (58 percent) and 21 do not enjoy recruiting (42 percent).
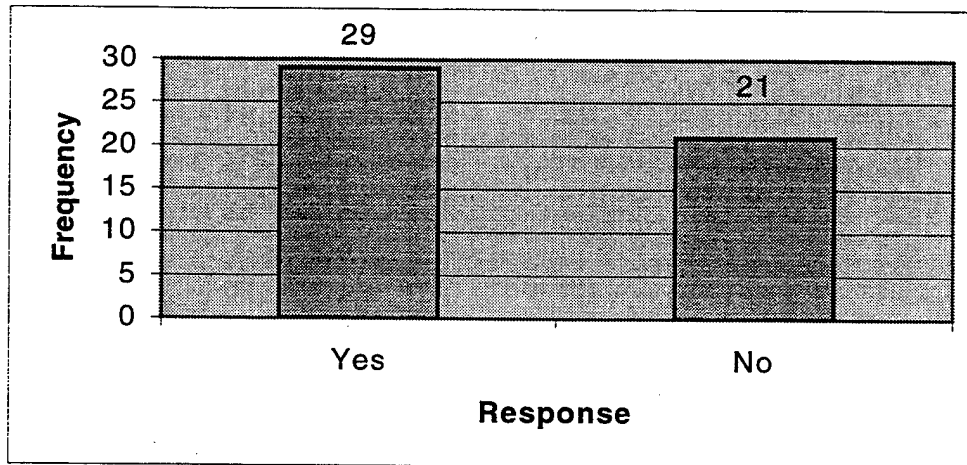
Figure 5.5. Enjoyment of Recruiting Duty

10. What motivates you to achieve goal/quota?

Figure 5.6 shows what motivates recruiters to achieve their mission. Of the 50 respondents, 23 were motivated by self-motivation (46 percent), 7 were motivated by job requirement, time off, and fear of punishment (14 percent), and 6 are motivated by helping others (youths) improve their quality of life. None of the 50 respondents mentioned incentives as a motivator to achieve mission.
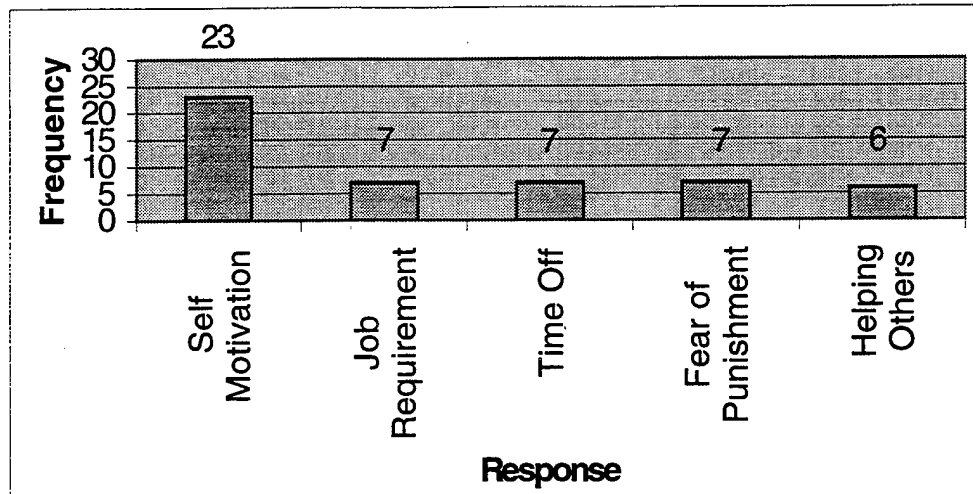
Figure 5.6. What Motivates Recruiters?

11. Do incentive programs affect the way you recruit?

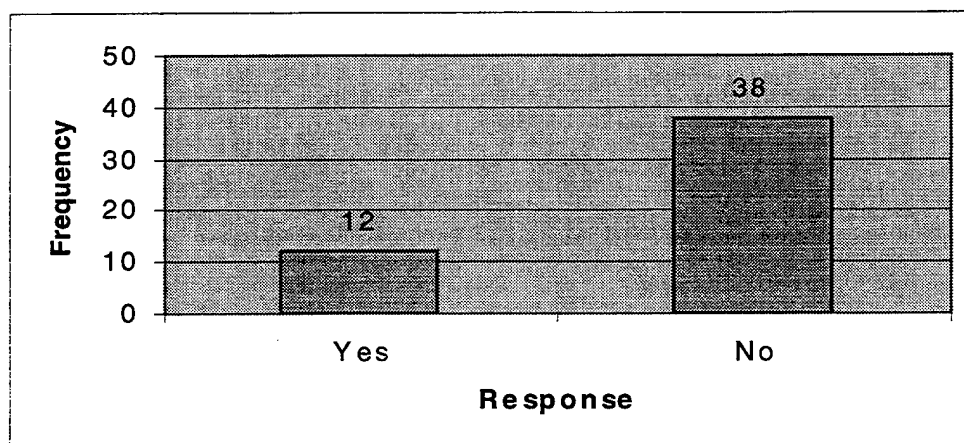Figure 5.7 shows the number of recruiters that are affected by incentives. Of the 50 respondents, 12 are affected (24 percent) and 38 were not affected by incentives (76 percent).

Figure 5.7. Recruiters Affected by Incentives

12.   Do you understand the USAREC recruiter incentive award program?

Figure 5.8 shows the number of recruiters that understand the national incentive program. Of the 50 respondents, 47 said they understand the program (94 percent) and 3 said they did not understand the program (6 percent).
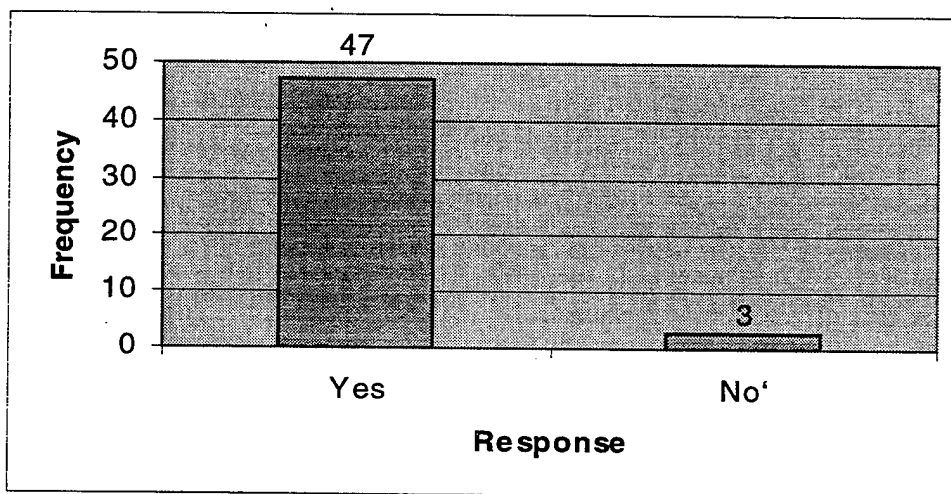
Figure 5.8. Recruiters that Understand the USAREC Incentive Awards Program

13.   Which part of the USAREC incentive awards program works best?

Figure 5.9 shows which part of the USAREC incentive awards program respondents said works best. Of the 50 respondents, 20 felt goal achievement was the best part of the program (40 percent) and 13 did not have an opinion of the incentive program (26 percent).
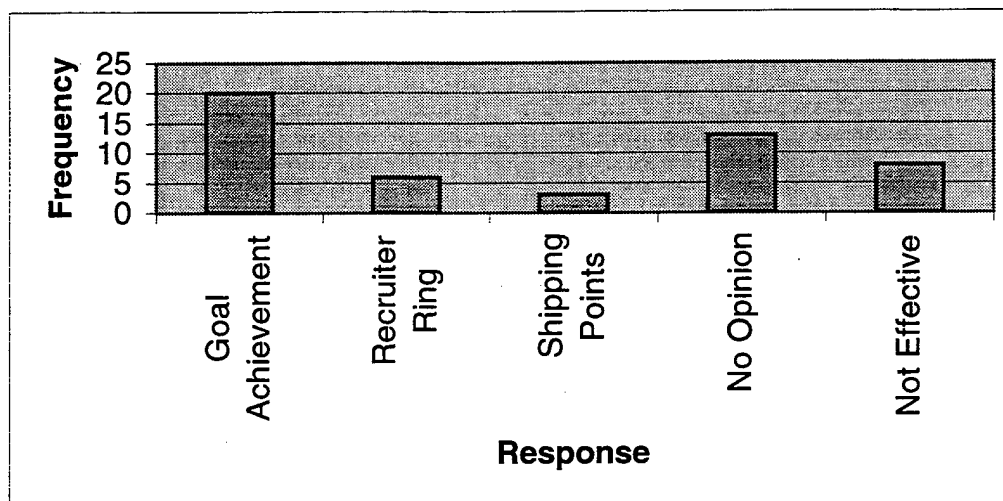
Figure 5.9. Best Part of the USAREC Incentive Program

14. **Which part of the USAREC incentive awards program did not work?**

Figure 5.10 shows which part of the USAREC incentive awards program did not work according to the respondents. Twenty-seven felt the six-month sliding window did not work (54 percent) and 18 had no opinion (36 percent).
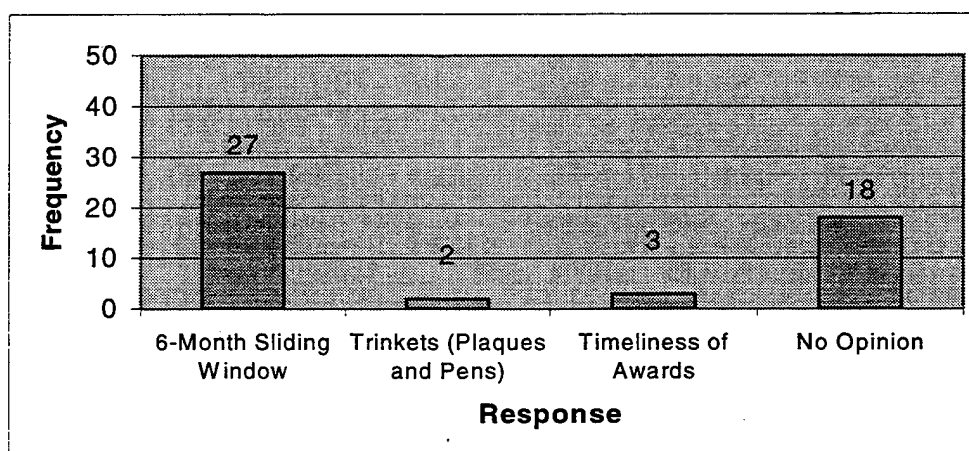
Figure 5.10. Reason for USAREC Awards Program not Working

15. Which part of the local incentives program for recruiters works best?

Figure 5.11 shows which part of the local incentive program works. Of the 50 respondents, 25 felt that time-off passes were the best incentive and 15 had no opinion (30 percent).
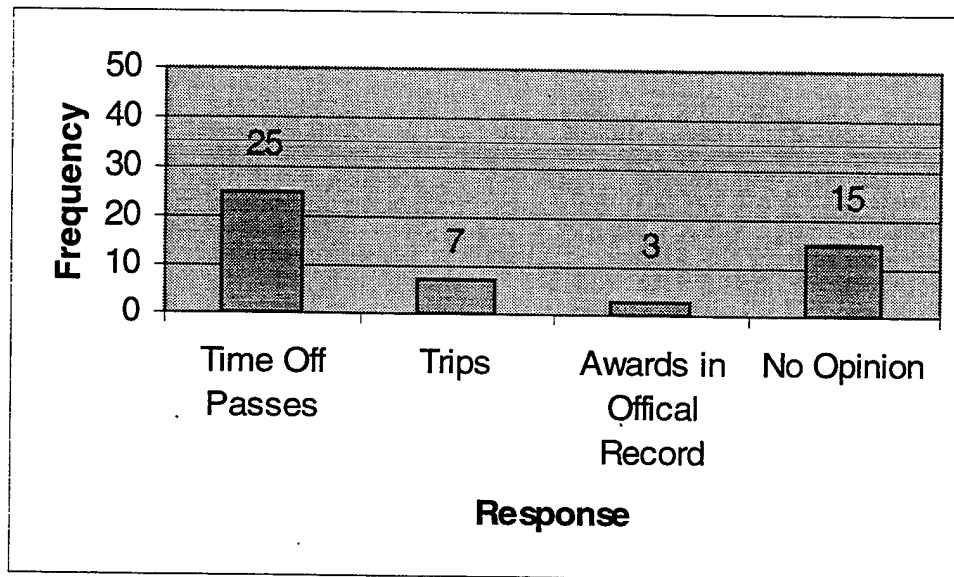
Figure 5.11. Best Part of the Local Incentive Award Program

16. Which part of the local incentive program for recruiters does not work?

Figure 5.12 shows local incentives reported to not work. Of the 50 respondents, 16 had no opinion (32 percent) and 14 said trinkets (plaques and pens) did not work (32 percent).

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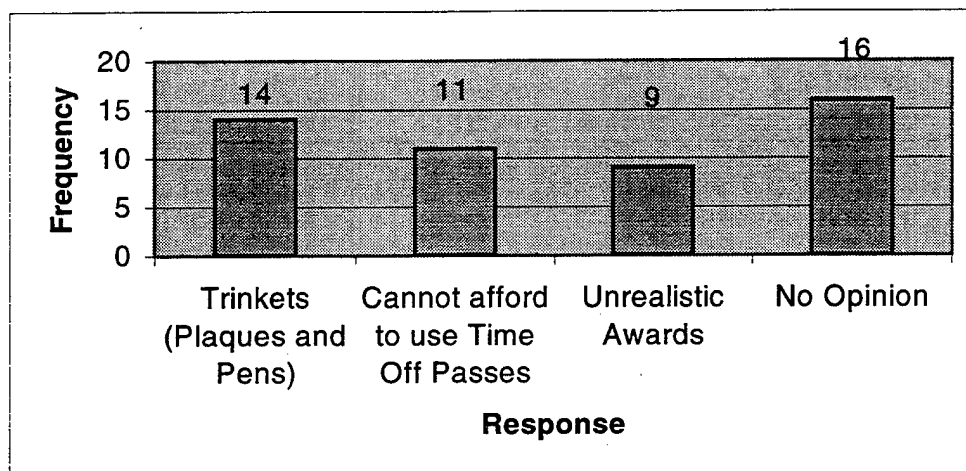
Figure 5.12. Reason for Local Incentives not Working

17. **If you could improve the recruiters' incentive program (USAREC) to increase productivity, how would you change it?**

Figure 5.13 shows the type of changes recruiters would like to see to the USAREC incentive awards program that could increase productivity. Of the 50 respondents, 12 would not change the current point system (24 percent), 10 would like family trips included (20 percent), and 8 would like a point system that assigns points based on the ability to recruit in a certain geographical area (16 percent).
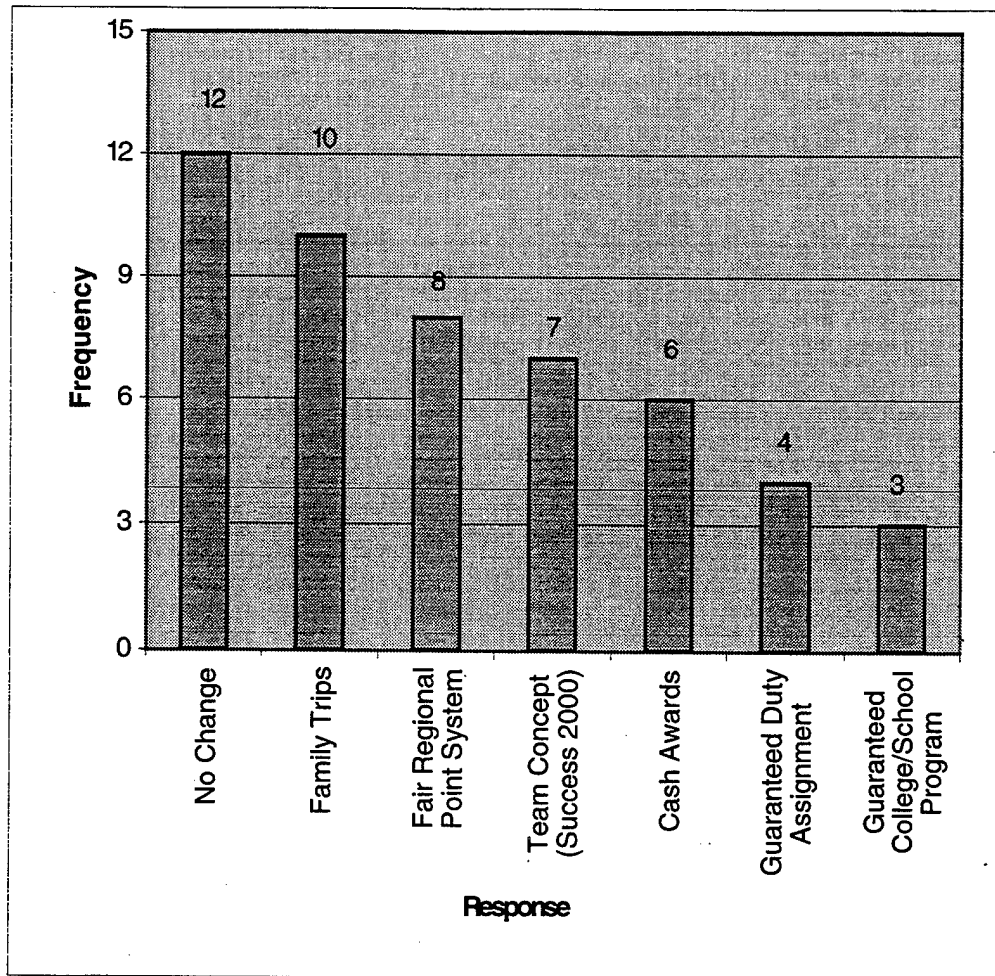
Figure 5.13. Incentive Award Changes that would Improve Productivity for the USAREC Program

18. **If you could improve the recruiters' incentive program (local) to increase productivity, how would you change it?**

Figure 5.14 shows changes recruiters would make to improve productivity at the local incentive awards level. Of the 50 respondents, 19 would like see more time-off passes (38 percent), 9 would like to have the mission requirement reduced (18 percent), and 8 would like to see

Saturday work days eliminated, and better understanding leadership (16 percent).
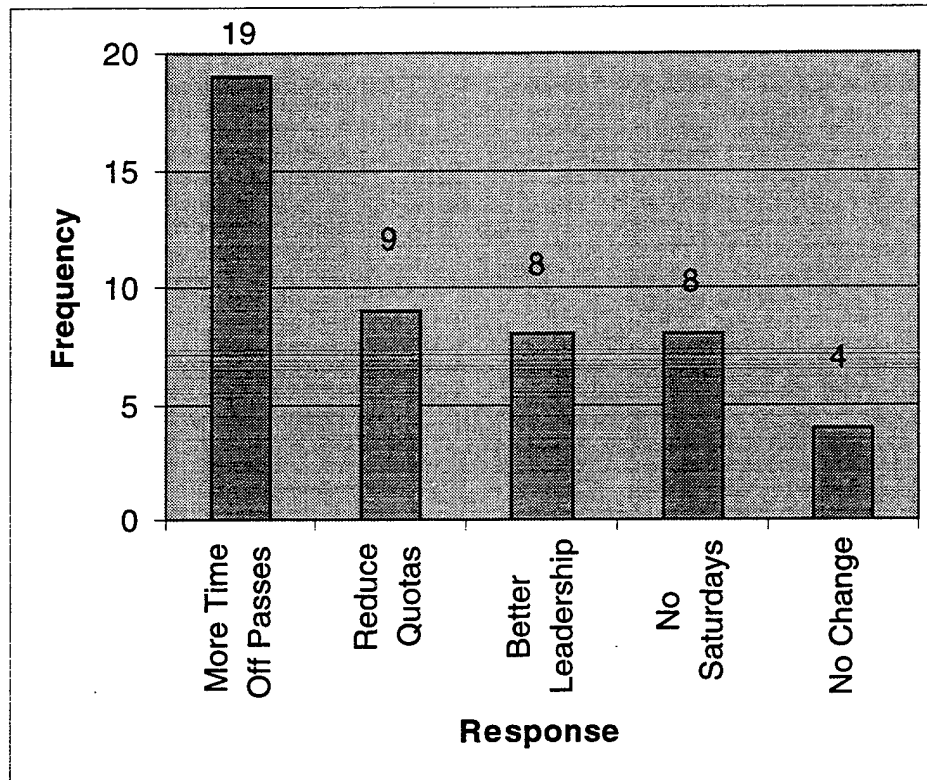
Figure 5.14. Incentive Award Program Changes that would Improve the Local Program.

C.   STAFF INTERVIEWS

Ten recruiting staff personnel were also interviewed about how the incentive programs were measured for effectiveness. Staff personnel at the brigade and battalion levels were all asked the questions provided in Appendix B.

Demographic questions (in Appendix B) provide the following information about the 10 respondents: five have

between 15 and 20 years, and five have over 20 years of active duty service. They all have previous recruiting experience; three have six to ten years and seven have over ten years experience in the recruiting field. In their current assignments, these staff personnel have between 6 months and 3 years, and an average of 2.1 years at their current jobs. Seven were volunteers and three did not volunteer for their current assignment.

1. **What do you think most motivates recruiters?**

Of the 10 respondents, 7 felt time-off and 3 felt self-motivation motivates recruiters.

2. **How effective is the USAREC recruiter incentive program in increasing recruiter productivity?**

Of the 10 respondents, five felt the national recruiter incentive program was not effective, three stated it was OK at best, and two had no opinion.

3. **How do you evaluate or measure recruiter productivity by using the USAREC recruiter incentive program?**

Of the 10 respondents, seven were not aware of any method of measurement and three felt that the plaques on their office walls, or awards displayed on their uniforms measured a recruiters' success or productivity.

4. How effective is the local recruiter incentive program in increasing recruiter productivity?

All 10 respondents stated that they were not sure how effective the different local incentive programs were in increasing productivity.

5. How do you evaluate or measure recruiter productivity by using the local recruiter incentive program?

All 10 respondents stated that they were not aware of any measurement on how local incentives affect productivity.

D. SUMMARY

This chapter provided data results from 50 semi-structured interviews conducted with Army recruiters and 10 semi-structured interviews conducted with Army recruiting staff personnel. Conclusions from the data results about the effect incentives have on recruiters are discussed in Chapter VI, including recommendations on ways to improve the incentive program.

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VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A.   INTRODUCTION

Chapter V provided the results of data collected from 60 semi-structured interviews of Army recruiters and staff personnel. The results are used to answer the primary and secondary research questions posed in Chapter I. Additionally, recommendations and suggested future research on Army recruiters' incentives are provided.

B.   CONCLUSIONS

The Army recruiter incentive program does not appear to motivate recruiters to meet or exceed mission-recruiting requirements.

Sixty Army recruiters and staff personnel indicated that the current incentives do not motivate them to achieve mission-recruiting requirements. Although 60 interviews are a relatively small sample compared to the population of over 6,000 recruiters, the respondents conveyed a fairly consistent message about what motivated them to achieve mission-recruiting requirements. Intrinsic rewards matter most, i.e., time-off, family, and goal achievement. Extrinsic rewards are not primary motivators, i.e., pins, plaques, and medallions. From 60 interviews, not one respondent mentioned current incentives (extrinsic rewards) as motivators.

"Self-motivation" accounted for approximately 50 percent of the respondents' source of motivation to achieve mission-recruiting requirements. This agrees with Thomas and Jensen's (1996) premise that individuals receive psychological rewards from the tasks on which they are engaged. Psychological rewards are known as an "inner experience" of intrinsic motivation (Thomas and Jensen, 1996). Recruiters receive this psychological reward, "self-motivation", when making or exceeding their monthly recruiting mission. This type of inner experience reinforces and energizes the recruiters' behavior and has a positive effect on productivity.

"Goal Achievement" is perceived to have the greatest positive influence from the (USAREC) national incentive program.

Goal achievement was perceived to have the greatest positive influence on recruiters. Forty percent of the respondents stated that this was the best part of the national program. Recruiters felt that being aware of the different point requirements gave them a goal to achieve. Achieving the goal appears to be more important to the recruiter than receiving an accompanying extrinsic reward. Eight percent of the respondents felt that the recruiter ring (extrinsic reward) has a positive influence on

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recruiters. This reinforces the importance of intrinsic motivation and shows that extrinsic rewards have little effect on motivating recruiters.

In the Porter and Lawler model (1968), employees attach different values to rewards. An employee is motivated to perform when they perceive the value of the reward as fair and equitable for the amount of effort required for a given task. Specifically in recruiting, the current awards being given to recruiters do not appear to be seen as fair and equitable, especially in a difficult recruiting era. Seventy-six percent of the respondents reported they were not affected by the current incentives being awarded. This indicates that the current awards are not perceived to motivate, or to have a positive effect on the majority of recruiters.

Another area that appears to have a negative impact on recruiters' motivation is the loss of points after the six-month sliding window. Fifty-four percent of the recruiters are discouraged and frustrated when they lose points due to this time constraint. They perceive the six-month sliding window as particularly unfair in a difficult recruiting market.

Time-off awards may have the greatest positive influence on recruiter motivation.

Fifty percent of the respondents stated that "time-off" has the greatest influence among current local incentives. Local incentives include awards given at the brigade, battalion, company and recruiting officer. Each command has control over how and when to award time-off. Ironically, while time-off is seen as a strong incentive, recruiters felt they are unable to take time-off when it is awarded. Since recruiters are on monthly quota requirements, taking time-off can interfere with achieving the next monthly recruiting mission.

Recruiters have new ideas on how to motivate them to meet or exceed mission requirements.

The question of how to change or improve the current USAREC and local incentive programs were difficult for many respondents to answer, however, several ideas emerged. The majority of those interviewed expressed no new ideas on how to improve the current program on the national level. "Including the family" in the reward program is one idea that emerged from 20 percent of the recruiters. Evidently, finding ways to reward families might serve to counter recruiters' long working hours. Sixteen percent of the recruiters felt that having the

same point system for each region unfairly benefited the areas with strong recruiting markets. They felt that a point system tailored to each geographic area would be fair.

On the local level, more time-off and eliminating Saturday workdays could markedly improve the local incentive programs. Some respondents felt if "the leadership" had a complete understanding beyond the numbers (quota) game, they would understand the day-to-day needs (intrinsic) of a recruiter. Again, their comments reflect the importance of intrinsic motivation needs such as appropriate (normal) working hours, over extrinsic devices such as pen and pencil sets.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has opened a window to what really matters to the Army recruiter. New ideas have been presented and additional research should be conducted to further quantify the findings. The following incentive program recommendations are made to the Army recruiting command to help improve and meet the increasing demand placed on recruiters to achieve mission:

1.   Conduct a survey of the entire population of
     Army recruiters to determine if the same results
     can be duplicated from this small sample size
     study.

2.   Determine precisely which intrinsic motivation
     rewards have the greatest positive effect on
     Army recruiters.

3.   Include the family in the incentive program,
     i.e. trips, dinners, or movie passes.

4.   Determine if recruiters in one geographic area
     receive more awards than another area due to the
     differences in the potential recruiting market.

5.   Determine precisely which extrinsic rewards have
     the greatest positive effect on recruiters, and
     discard the rest.

6.   Determine if the six-month sliding window has a
     negative impact on motivating the recruiter to
     meet or exceed mission requirements.

7.   Develop a measurement of productivity of each
     incentive program. When a new incentive is
     developed determine if it improves productivity.

D.   SUMMARY

The Army incentive programs for recruiters on the

national and local levels have been based primarily on

extrinsic motivation for years. According to the results

obtained from this study, recruiters feel that the current

incentives are not effective motivators on their behavior

to meet and exceed mission. Recruiters are saying that

intrinsic motivation factors such as self-motivation and

time-off are what motivates them to optimum productivity.

These recommendations, if implemented, will strengthen recruiters' motivation to meet and exceed mission requirements.

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APPENDIX A

This study is voluntary. All information being requested is needed to study Army Recruiter Incentive trends. Personnel being interviewed will not be personally identified in this study.

Questions for Recruiting Station

1. What is your rank?

2. What is your Gender?

3. How long have you been in the Army?

4. Are you married?

5. How long have you been in recruiting?

6. How long have you been in this assignment?

7. Are you a volunteer for this assignment?

8. Are you a 79R (Cadre)?

9. Do you enjoy recruiting?

10. What motivates you to achieve goal/quota?

11. Do incentive programs affect the way you recruit?

12. Do you understand the (USAREC) national recruiter incentive program?

13. Which part of the USAREC incentive awards program works best?

14. Which part of the USAREC incentive awards program did not work?

15. Which part of the local incentive program for recruiters works best?

16. Which part of the local incentive program for recruiters does not work?

17. If you could improve the recruiters' incentive program (USAREC) to increase productivity, how would you change it?

18. If you could improve the recruiters' incentive program (local) to increase productivity, how would you change it?

This study is voluntary. All information being requested is needed to study Army Recruiter Incentive trends. Personnel being interviewed will not be personally identified in this study.

Questions for brigades, battalions and companies

1. How long have you been in the Army?

2. How long have you been in recruiting?

3. How long have you been in this assignment?

4. Are you a volunteer for this assignment?

5. What do you think most motivates recruiters?

6. How effective is the USAREC recruiter incentive program in increasing recruiter productivity?

7. How do you evaluate or measure recruiter productivity by using the USAREC recruiter incentive program?

8. How effective is the local recruiter incentive program in increasing recruiter productivity?

9. How do you evaluate or measure recruiter productivity by using the local recruiter incentive program?

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